

The LINK



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THE Kept Ones

ROSE H. ANDERSON

The weeping clouds hung low above our little village in the Land of the Rising Sun, as the missionary pastor and I stood at the river's edge, looking forlornly at the raging waters. The others had gone on to their homes, babbling about the tragedy. Why should the ailing father of lovely Gayla seek forgetfulness beneath the dark waters? Solemnly I asked the minister, "Why did he find life so dark that to end it seemed right? Had we not come along this dreary pathway, and had you not risked your life to pull him from the waters, then would the heart of Gayla know deep grief."

The pastor looked at his muddy boots and shook his head, puzzled

and troubled, "We must change our wet clothing, then talk long with Gayla. For the truth is not here, Wei Jen. Gayla's father believed in the Jesus way, even though he had not been long with us. I cannot believe this was his will. Did he have enemies? Perhaps in coming in with us, he sealed his doom, for the enemies of the Lord never sleep."

Later as we stood before the door of Gayla's home, my heart beat rapidly, for I greatly loved this lovely one. Gently the old minister rapped on the door and called softly through the dusk: "It is your friends, Gayla; we would talk with you."

My heart ached for the grief in

Author Rose H. Anderson divides her time between free-lance writing and collecting handkerchiefs. She has an 800-piece collection, composed mostly of map and historical hankies.

her face as she faced us. Brushing tears from her cheeks, she demanded, "Go your way and leave me with my grief. My father lies near death because he believed in the words you gave him. I too would believe, yet now I shall return our plaster gods to their rightful places. Because my father believed, he suffers greatly."

Firmly my friend assured her, "You are never alone, dear child. All our friends in the faith are by your side in prayer, in sympathy. Our wonderful Lord is ever near."

Her rudeness to my friend hurt me deeply, so I asked her in amazement, "Did they not tell you how the pastor risked his life to save your father?"

Shame flooded her face, then she spoke, "How could I make sense of their babbling? They told me that because he believed in the Jesus way, death had come seeking him beneath the dark waters." Well enough I knew their superstitions, those who envied and feared us who would follow the Lord of life.

Gently the kind preacher spoke, "Your father will be himself within a few days, Gayla. Yet even had he found death, all would have been well with him, for he was one of the kept ones of the Lord. Tell me, dear child, who would wish death for your father?"

Gayla had no answer for us, so wearily we walked away from the home where grief had been changed to hope. Before we had left, Gayla had told us, "I, too, would walk the Jesus way, since you have shown this great cour-

age. I'd thought it a way of weaklings."

"Peter and Paul knew great hardships following the pathway set by our Lord, yet because they endured, this day our Lord's followers are legion. It takes courage to become a kept one of the Lord."

The rain had lessened in fury as we walked slowly homeward, our hearts troubled. I heard the voice of my kind friend ask, "I had thought your frequent desire to visit this home was due to the lovely young daughter of the house, young friend."

Sharp pain pierced my heart, for I must answer in all truth, "She is promised to Kan Tze, for a debt. My love must remain unspoken."

Amazement and shock swept through me as I saw the change in the pastor's face. He gripped my arm tightly as he spoke in eagerness, "The truth is dawning, my young friend. Find Kan Tze and bring him to me, for there are many questions I would ask of him."

I turned to face him as I asked in dread, "I am to seek the haunts of this evil one who reeks of strong drink and boasts of his great wealth?"

"With him lies the truth, Wei Jen."

For many years had I served the minister after he had rescued me from the worship of our idols of plaster, yet this was the one time I dreaded the wild errand on which I'd been sent. Find Kan Tze? As simple as looking for a lotus bud on a lily stalk. I walked many strange pathways before

finding him, and battled with a number of his guards before taking Kan Tze captive. Looking upon the drunken, sodden figure before me, fierce hatred flamed through me. To think that my lovely Gayla had been promised to him. I was not gentle in waking him from his drunken sleep. Mud coated his heavy boots, mud he'd gotten from the river bank. How understanding was my kind friend.

Half dragging, half carrying Kan Tze, I took him to my friend. The pastor helped me place him in the large comfortable chair, and we fed him cups of strong green tea. His eyes darted here and there in fear as understanding came to him that he was in a foreign place. My friend remained quietly in his chair, keeping his eyes on Kan Tze. The eyes of evil Kan Tze met the clear eyes of the kind one; silence was like a muffled blanket, then pity filled my soul as I beheld terror fill Kan Tze's eyes.

Terror held the thoughts of Kan Tze. That I could rightly see, for he began to babble while tears ran down his cheeks, "Let me go! I didn't shove him in; he fell!"

Quickly I spoke aloud: "If this be the truth, why then were you screaming in your drunken sleep of rushing waters and eyes that gleamed in the dark. Tell me, Kan Tze, what do you fear?"

Quietly my kind minister spoke, "Gayla's father settled his debt, didn't he, Kan Tze? He released his daughter, so she could marry the one she loved? Speak the truth, Kan Tze, and find release."

Kan Tze crouched in his chair, fear holding him tightly, then he began to sob, "Gayla is my only love, how can I bear to let her go to another? Her father had promised me, he broke his promise . . ."

Gently my friend spoke, "He promised you Gayla before he became one of our kept ones! When understanding came to him how evil was the way you walked, he would not let you marry his daughter. You behold, Kan Tze, the truth is ever with me, for I serve a loving God!" It was the truth in my friend's face, the kindness of a pure conscience, that brought the truth spilling from the evil one, for evil cannot stand before truth.

Kan Tze seemed to shrivel in his fear, as he began to plead: "Where shall I find a hiding place? The eyes follow no matter how much I drink, the eyes will not go away, the eyes of Gayla's father as they stared at me in unbelief when I threw him in the river!"

Firmly my friend spoke, while my heart began to sing, believing in the hope that Gayla would be my bride. "You must go to Gayla's father, ask his forgiveness, then have the wisdom to turn to our great God of peace and comfort. In him is the strength to turn away from your evil way and strong drink."

Fearfully, Kan Tze asked: "Her father would forgive?"

"Aye, he is a kept one in the kingdom of our Lord. In this great Kingdom we learn to forgive, for this is the true way of peace."



Bill Kreh

When Rear Admiral Lorenzo S. Sabin graduated from the Naval Academy in 1921, he certainly never expected that he'd be picked to head the greatest humanitarian effort in the history of the Navy. Yet those were the orders from Washington. His job was to provide a passage to freedom from Haiphong to Saigon, Indochina, for hundreds of thousands of

frightened Viet Nameese refugees fleeing Communist rule. From all indications, it would be the biggest mass civilian evacuation by sea of all time.

Thousands of the refugees would be children—tiny, hungry waifs who had never known anything but terror. Just as many would be aged and crippled men and women, tired and feeble, with barely the strength to carry a few meager belongings on their backs. All of them would have to be cleaned, clothed, and fed.

It was a tough assignment for the fighting admiral and his men, but they tackled it with typical Navy gusto. Wheels began to turn. Within hours the first supplies had been ordered, and ships and crews were being readied for their unusual task.



Greatest sea-lift in history helps

hundreds of thousands flee Communism

In a few days, the admiral's big, gray ships began taking aboard their pitiful cargo. It's said that some of the sailors had wet eyes at the sight as the refugees slowly boarded the ships. Some had to be carried. Others staggered across the gangway, their meager belongings strapped on their backs. They rolled their eyes and bit their lips with obvious fear in their hearts. Because they didn't know what to expect, they watched the American sailors suspiciously.

Most of the refugees didn't even notice the big multi-colored sign that was hanging alongside the ship. In English and in Viet Nameese, it spelled out "Your Passage to Freedom."

The first ship, loaded to the gunwales with milling, uneasy refugees, had just pulled anchor when Admiral Sabin was unofficially informed that his sailors had given him a nickname. Some say it was started by a sailor who one day jokingly referred to the admiral as "Moses." The link between the versatile Navy admiral and the biblical character who led people out of Egypt to escape persecution by the Pharaohs was so obvious that the nickname caught on.

Getting the thousands of fleeing refugees to freedom across 800 miles of heavy seas was Admiral Sabin's job. But the task of winning the friendship and trust of the Viet Nameese was strictly in the hands of the American blue-

jackets. They did a job of which our diplomats could be proud.

No one had to tell these refugees of the terror of Communism. They were giving up their ancestral homes rather than live and die in slavery. But anti-Communism isn't necessarily synonymous with pro-Americanism.

Before these pitiful people filed slowly aboard the Navy ships, they had been subjected for days to torrents of Communist propaganda. One refugee related through an interpreter that the Reds warned them to stay behind because "the Americans will beat you, starve you, and throw you overboard."

Once the Viet Nameese were aboard, however, the sailors took over. By the time the first meal of





French landing craft comes alongside Navy attack transport in Bai Do Long, northern Indo-China, to transfer 1,000 Viet Nameese refugees to safety. These refugees will travel from here to Saigon on the Navy ship. There they will be placed in refugee camps set up by the French.

rice, fish, and tea had been eaten, hope and spirit were gradually returning to the Oriental faces.

Things got off to a fast start aboard the USS BAYFIELD. A chief petty officer, standing at the gangplank as the refugees filed aboard, spotted a frightened, dust-covered little girl whose face had only two clean lines where tears had washed away the dirt.

Taking the child by the hand, the six-foot, 200-pound chief led her to the shower. He gave her a good scrubbing and rinsing, and covered her with one of his shirts while her tattered garments dried in the sun. Then he delivered her to her bewildered parents.

The girl told her mother, as best she could, what had happened. The mother's face lighted up. She interpreted the shower bath as a baptism. Happily, she told other Viet Nameese mothers that her daughter had been "baptized the American way." She re-

ferred to the chief as a "priest."

Soon the sailors all over the ship were besieged by children asking to be "baptized" and, before long, the entire crew was known as "priests"!

Admiral Sabin's monumental sea lift wasn't all smooth sailing. Emergencies arose, but most of them were speedily ironed out by quick-thinking Navy men. One 20-year-old Viet Nameese girl fell overboard into heavy seas from the USS TELFAIR, but was promptly rescued by a Navy picket boat.

Various kinds of illnesses, including seasickness, were cured by Navy medical men. Sometimes lives were saved. One quick-thinking hospital-man saved the life of a two-month-old baby by building a makeshift oxygen tent. The baby, stricken with acute bronchial pneumonia, had stopped breathing when the child's frantic mother rushed into the ship's sick-

bay, holding the baby. The ship's doctor, who had worked all night on other cases, was at breakfast. Hospitalman John Osborn of Geneva, Illinois, saw that there wasn't a moment to lose.

Without hesitation, he grabbed a nearby cardboard box, emptied the contents, and set it upside down on a table. He punched a hole in one end of the box, taped cellophane over the top, and inserted hoses from an oxygen tent. Placing the baby carefully in the make-shift tent, he turned on the oxygen.

The baby began to breathe and its color became natural again. "That baby would have died within minutes if it hadn't been for Osborn's crude oxygen tent," the doctor reported. Even with things under control again, Osborn didn't consider his job done. Despite the fact that he was due to go off duty, he stayed by the infant throughout the night.

And then there was the case of 17-year-old Marie Vangdo. Two months in a Communist prison camp and a leg full of shrapnel had her marked for death as she was carried aboard. Navy corpsmen spotted her immediately. They quickly examined her emaciated body and took X-rays of her swollen leg. "She didn't weigh more than 75 pounds when we got her, and that leg looked like a fencepost," a doctor commented.

Through an interpreter, Marie explained how the Viet Minh had made her a prisoner and for two months kept her in camp, and gave her little or nothing to eat. Finally released, she and a group

of fellow prisoners started back to their village. On the way, one of them stepped on a land mine. The explosion knocked Marie to the ground and peppered her leg with shrapnel.

She spent the next two weeks without medical attention—there just wasn't any available. After a while, her leg hurt only when she moved it. Then word reached her family that the Communists were coming back to their village to stay. They also learned of the plans for evacuation by the United States.

Communist propagandists told them they would be mistreated, that this evacuation was only talk. Despite all fears, her family packed what they could carry and made their way to the waiting Navy ships.

Marie didn't expect to find a doctor to care for her during the evacuation. She didn't understand what was wrong with her except that she was weak and her leg hurt. The X-rays showed she had ten large chunks of shrapnel in her leg.

"Two more weeks without medical attention and the infection would have killed her," the ship's doctor reported. When she was operated on Navy cook Richard Miotaka of Milwaukee volunteered a pint of his blood. "You might say she's collected her share of hell and needed it more than I did," the sailor said. By the time the BAYFIELD reached Saigon, her chances of living were good, and her leg might even be saved.

As she was carried from the ship, one of the sailors nudged his

shipmate and said, "I wonder if she ever before realized that there was someone in the world besides her folks who cared if she lived or died?"

Sickbays were filled to capacity on each trip. Malnutrition, pneumonia, and tuberculosis were rampant among the refugees. By journey's end, however, most were well on the road to recovery, thanks to modern medicine and hard-working Navy medics.

Dozens of babies were born on the ships—ships that never before had even been boarded by a woman. With typical Navy thoroughness, Admiral Sabin had been prepared for this eventuality, although it's safe to assume that no man aboard ever thought he'd see the stork visit a ship of the fleet. It's reported that the supply officer in Yokusaka, Japan, was the most surprised man in the Navy the day he received Admiral Sabin's order for layettes. One Navy hospital corpsman, Paul D. Denencourt of Sutton, Massachusetts, assisted in the birth of four babies during the evacuation. He had the honor of having one of them, a six-pound boy, named "Bon"—the Viet Nameese name for Paul.

It didn't take long for the versatile Navy bluejackets to introduce the natives to bits of Americana. On one trip aboard the USS MAGOFFIN a beauty contest was held. Three young Viet Nameese girls vied for the title of "Miss Passage to Freedom." In true "Miss America" fashion, the winner was crowned with a sailor's hat decorated with American, French and Viet Nameese flags.

She was honored with dinner at the captain's table.

Meanwhile, aboard the USS COMSTOCK, listening to the ship's hillbilly band soon proved to be a favorite pastime of the refugees. After an initial concert, the sailors were swamped with requests from the Viet Nameese for repeat performances. In return, some of the musical-minded refugees gave impromptu lessons on mandolin-type instruments that a few of them had carried aboard with them.

Electric razors, drinking fountains, the public address system, showers, ice cream, and radios proved to be items of unfailing fascination for the natives. Most of them quickly forgot their past troubles and uncertain future.

But what did more than anything else to win the friendship of the natives was the Navy men's generous, sympathetic, and tender attitude toward the children. It didn't take long for the youngsters to learn that sailors can't resist kids. The bluejackets opened their hearts to them, and it did more toward winning the trust and friendship of the Viet Nameese than any amount of speeches or free military equipment.

One eight-year-old girl, carrying her baby brother on her back, was spotted by sailor Donald R. Crady of Lebanon, Kentucky, as she came aboard. "She had the cutest smile I ever saw," the young sailor said. He made sure that she and her family were settled in a makeshift tent on one of the ship's hatch covers where it was cooler than in the compartments.

Then he gave the girl a small jacket he had purchased in Japan for his niece in Kentucky.

"The little tyke had to fight off the other kids for that jacket, but she sure did get a kick out of it," Crady said.

Another crew member asked the recreation officer the second day at sea for a softball. The seaman got the ball and was back an hour later for another one. "One of those kids doesn't savvy a low throw to home yet, sir," the sailor said, "and the ball went overboard."

By the time the ships had reached their destination, the kids

and sailors had become almost inseparable. Saying good-bye to their tiny wards was about the toughest part of the voyage for most of the sailors.

A grizzled old chief bos'n summed it up this way, as he watched a host of sailors bid farewell to refugee youngsters, "It just goes to show you that nothing pleases a sailor like a kid, and the dirtier, hungrier, and lonelier the kid is, the better."

A few minutes later, the old chief, after seeing the reactions of the departing youngsters, added with a smile, "And I guess nothing pleases kids better than sailors."

Many little babies like this one were born during the evacuation. Hospital Corpsman Richard G. Bailie (right) assisted in the delivery.





Raymond Black

Private Robert J. Wiley stood trembling at the desk of Sergeant Michael T. Murphy, Top Kick, Company G, 28th Infantry, Hawaiian Division. The remainder of the company stood in formation in front of the company barracks, in full field equipment, ready to depart on the second practice march. Sergeant Murphy scowled as he thumbed rapidly through his little black book. His blue eyes were hard, and his face was almost as white as his short cropped hair.

"Private Wiley, yesterday you turned out late for drill; for three days you've been tardy getting to the mess hall, and now, this morning, you keep the entire company standing in full field equipment while you sit in the washroom reading Shakespeare. When that whistle sounds, move! Do you understand?"

**The
Unpredictable
Private**

USA

Barrington

Running a hand through his thick black hair, Private Wiley stammered, "Yes sir—er—yes, Sergeant, but I didn't hear the whistle; and I wasn't reading Shakespeare; I was reading American History." He continued in a faltering voice, "I'm studying to go to West Point!"

The first sergeant's huge fist came down hard on the desk. "West Point! Impossible! You're not even good Pfc material. Now get out there in ranks. If I ever as much as find a wrinkle in your bunk, on K. P. you go!"

The red volcanic dust, churned up by marching feet, at first choked Private Wiley. Then the white blanket of clouds opened up and the tropical shower soon transformed the dust into heavy red mud, which clung stubbornly to his number elevens. But Wiley marched on, sometimes with his head up, sometimes with it down. He liked to feel the soft rain in his face; to smell the wild sweetness of the tropical flowers, mingled with the aroma of ripening pineapples. Trudging along he thought of the day he'd go to West Point. He had always wanted to be an officer. Athletics in high school had given him a strong body, and a barrage of Army mental tests had demonstrated that he possessed the education and intelligence. The rest was up to him.

Private Wiley returned from the hike late that Friday after-

noon, flopped down on his bunk, took off his mud-covered number elevens and shoved them into the barrack bag, fastened to the head of his bunk. He sat there reviewing events of the past few weeks and his numerous encounters with Sergeant Murphy. Ten hours basic daily and studying far into the night had been rough. He got up every morning feeling tired and dull. Well, basic training was over now—he'd show the Top Kick he could soldier as well as anyone.

Wiley was still lying on his bunk thirty minutes later when the loudspeaker blared out, "Now hear this!" It was Sergeant Murphy's voice. "All equipment and squadrooms will be policed immediately. Inspection tomorrow by the Division Commander. That is all!"

Private Wiley polished the two pairs of shoes under his bunk until he could see himself in them. He washed the top of his wall locker and went over his bunk with a damp rag. He rearranged the items in his footlocker and polished his mess gear. He was satisfied when he went to bed that the General would find nothing wrong Saturday morning. In fact, he thought, the General might even compliment me.

At 0900 the next morning, the Division commander, a General with a discriminating eye, began his inspection.

The long procession of inspect-

Raymond Black retired from the Army in 1953 as a lieutenant colonel, having served thirty years in this country, in Europe, and in the Pacific. Writing is his hobby.

ing officers, colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants and sergeants, moved briskly through quarters, stopping occasionally to probe some item of equipment.

First Sergeant Murphy, black book and pencil in hand, brought up the rear of the long line. Trim, straight, and an outstanding soldier, he was known to the majority as the Grand Old Man of Company G, but to goldbricks he was known as "Scratch Pad," because he never forgot to write it down.

The inspection had progressed about two minutes when the General executed a quick flank movement, almost losing his staff, to bring himself to the head of Private Wiley's bunk.

The General commenced to scrutinize the contents of the oddly shaped barrack bag attached to Private Wiley's bunk. The bag, to judge from its appearance, might have contained a portable field range. He opened the bag and pulled out two pairs of number elevens, firebrick red with mud. Then walking over to the wall locker back of Wiley's bunk, the General pulled it away from the wall, bent down and explored the area with his swagger stick. Up tumbled three Coke bottles, a baseball bat, a varied assortment of newspapers and weeks of accumulated dirty sox.

Red-faced, the General stood in front of Private Wiley.

"How long have you been in the Army, son?" he asked.

"Three months, sir!"

"What's your name?"

"Wiley, er—Private Wiley, Company G, sir!"

"Where is your home?"

"Halfway, sir!"

"Halfway—hmm—" The General frowned. "Halfway where?"

"Halfway to the top, sir! I live on a mountain in Oregon and my home is halfway to the summit—Halfway, Oregon, sir!" he replied, pale and shaking at the knees.

The expression on the General's face changed from anger to amusement, and tapping the head of the iron bed lightly with his swagger stick, he turned to his aide, smiling.

"Investigate that phoney name, 'Halfway, Oregon,' Lieutenant. The government might give this man transportation only halfway to Oregon when he is discharged."

The inspecting party moved on and the inspection was now over.

Private Wiley came to rigid attention and saluted the company commander.

"Wiley, this morning at the inspection you disgraced the company," the captain said. "I'm restricting you to quarters and giving you extra duty. Very well, you may go now."

Private Wiley saluted and started to leave the orderly room.

"Get on those shoes and wall locker right away—report to me when you have finished," Sergeant Murphy shouted.

Private Wiley was beginning to feel he had made good progress with the Top Kick—he hadn't been called to the orderly room in three months. He was elated too because it was near the end of the marksmanship season, and he had an excellent chance to be high man in the company.

"That's right! And I wanted to go to West Point and I . . . well, I finally made it."

The old First Sergeant just stood there for a few seconds with misty eyes and a mingled feeling of pride and incredulity.

"Sergeant Murphy," the Lieutenant said, "it is indeed a surprise and pleasure to meet you again!"

Shortly Murphy excused himself and walked out into the hall mumbling to himself, "And to think, of all the lieutenants in the Army, it had to be him. And I've got six months before I can retire!" Well, he thought, he'd never made it if I hadn't started him off right!

Friday the company commander went on leave and Lieu-

tenant Wiley, second in command, took over.

"Guess we'd better drop TI&E this morning and get busy on quarters, Sergeant Murphy," he said. "We don't want to pass out too many extras at inspection tomorrow!"

Lieutenant Wiley continued, "Have all noncommissioned officers report to me immediately. I want every barrack bag and wall locker personally checked by you, and after the inspection I want to talk to all members of the company interested in forming a rifle team," the Lieutenant concluded, expanding his chest just enough to draw attention to the shiny distinguished marksman's badge.

"Scratch Pad" Murphy took his little black book, smiled, and walked out of the orderly room.

BATTLE NOTES

More than 250 miles of electric cable and about 800 miles of weld-ing go into the building of one modern U.S. battleship.

The USS HIGBEE is the only combatant ship named in honor of a woman (a Mrs. Lena Sutcliffe Higbee, second superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps).

Some of our latest interceptor planes carry more electronic equipment than goes into the construction of an average-sized television station—well over 6,500 tubes and coils.

United States submarines sank 1,392 enemy vessels (1,178 merchant and 214 naval) during World War II.

Airplanes were first used in warfare in 1911-12, against the Turks in Tripoli.

The Marines are called "leathernecks" because in the earlier days of the Corps, the Marine uniform included a leather stock at the collar of the jacket.

—JOSEPH C. STACEY

THE LITTLE BROWN CHURCH IN THE VALE

Lorraine V. Buckman

Every Sunday, thousands of churchgoers sing the rhythmic, "Come . . . come . . . come . . . come . . . come to the church in the wild-wood," and probably only a few realize they are raising their voices in recognition of a real church—a remote but famous house of prayer for all people, located in northeast Iowa.

Follow the Cedar River north from Cedar Rapids and Waterloo and, near the town of Nashua, you'll find The Little Brown Church. Standing serenely in an evergreen grove, this church every year is the scene of about a thousand marriages, and a pilgrimage goal for over 50,000 visitors.

A stroke of fate brought the hymn and the church together almost a century ago. Dr. William S. Pitts, the composer, visualized a church on this peaceful spot when, in 1857, he took a stage-coach tour of Iowa. Inspired by the beauty of the river valley near Nashua, he wrote the song after he had returned to his Wisconsin home.

Although his song was put away and almost forgotten, the people near a little town named Bradford had also seen the vision of a church in this verdant place and had done something about it.

For lack of other available colors, they painted their newly built edifice with its cubical belfry a dark brown.

Lured by his memories of the natural loveliness of the countryside, Dr. Pitts moved to a church in nearby Fredericksburg, Iowa. One night in 1864, his singing class met at the Bradford Church, and Dr. Pitts brought out his old manuscript. The singers were delighted, and soon the song was widely published.



THE BIG FISH and THE BIG INNING

Charles Ridpath

This was the situation in the last of the ninth in the final game of the World Series: Each team had won three games and the Boston White Sox were leading this one by a score of 6 to 5. The St. Louis Falcons were up with the bases loaded. Mickey Radnor, their heavy-hitting centerfielder, was at bat, and he had a count of two balls and two strikes. There were two out. There was tension you could cut with a knife in the crowded ball park.

Wally Logan felt the tautness move from the back of his neck on down through his entire body with an electrifying numbness as he stood on the grass behind and to the right of second base, waiting for the next pitch. He smacked a tanned fist into the hollow of his glove and looked nervously over toward first base, then over toward third.

Carl Burns was poised near third watching for fielding signals

from the plate. Behind the third baseman the sea of faces in the slanting tiers of seats rose high into the flag-draped stands, and Wally looked at them without really seeing them. He was scarcely aware even of the thunder of voices that rolled over the diamond unceasingly.

His eyes, narrowed by the drawn expression on his wide features, moved on to home plate and Mickey Radnor for an instant, and then to the pitcher's box. Bob Doran, the second Sox hurler of the day, was standing there, his glove tucked under one arm while he rubbed rosin into his hands and looked around the infield.

He has to get it in there within two pitches, Larry thought. How can he stand this pressure? If it's tough on us what's he going through?

The second baseman thumped his glove again with a nervous movement. Last game, ninth

inning, three on, two away, a fortune riding on each pitch. The purpose of their entire season boiled down to one agonizing moment. In all of his eight years in baseball he'd never seen anything like this. Neither had anyone else.

"Take it easy, boy."

Dan Lyons was shouting to their pitcher from over at first and Carl Burns took up the chatter from the opposite side.

"O.K., Bobby boy, we're right with ya!"

Loudly, if not with certainty, Wally shouted, "They can't make it, boy!"

The tall, long-armed Sox pitcher was leaning forward now to study the signal of Barney Matthews, their veteran catcher. Slowly he straightened up on the mound and stretched his arms upward, the ball concealed behind his glove. He brought the ball down to his chest and glanced at first base, then around to second and third. Larry's man had the longest lead and the runner at third was edging forward, ready to go. The incessant clamor of the multitude faded.

Bob Doran brought his right arm back, then up and overhead as he stepped forward off the hill. It was a fast ball, in close, high, and Mickey Radnor started to swing the big bat around—and then stopped. The sphere thumped into Barney's mitt and the plate umpire jerked a fist overhead. Ball three!

Sports is Charles Ridpath's favorite subject. He played basketball and baseball himself before a World War II battle wound injured his foot. Now his interest is primarily as a spectator.

The frenzied roar of the crowd broke loose again, rising above the high walls of the park in torrential waves of sound.

Barney Matthews stood up and walked out in front of the plate, holding the ball. At the St. Louis dugout all of the players were standing and shouting incoherently at both the batter and the opposing pitcher.

Out near second base Wally saw the unbearable pressure take effect upon Bob Doran. He saw it not in his facial expression, but rather in the way the young pitcher's shoulders seemed to stiffen, and the way he walked as he turned and went behind the mound to pick up the rosin bag. It was as though that last pitch had been his greatest effort, and now he had to go through it again, this time with a full count.

Up there in the stands the en-



tire sell-out crowd was on its feet now, and the yelling and screaming of the thousands of voices was an ear-splitting din that drowned out the shouts of the players on the field. Wally glimpsed the anxious faces in the press and broadcasting booths and he imagined what the commentators were saying into their microphones.

"... this is the greatest Series final in all baseball history. Bob Doran, a rookie hurler two years ago and twelve-game winner for the Sox this season, faces the excruciating task of pitching to slugging Mickey Radnor with the count three and two, two out, the tying run on third, the winning run on second..."

Wally took a couple of short backward steps, trying to get into better position. Then he saw that Barney Matthews was walking out to the mound. The short, heavily built catcher walked almost leisurely, and Wally marveled at his calmness. The leathery, round face, with deep blue

eyes, wrinkled at the outer corners from the years of squinting out across the bright diamond, appeared as unworried as if this were a spring exhibition game.

They huddled in front of the hill and Dan Lyons ran over from first to join them. Barney was talking and tossing the ball down into his mitt while Bob stood kicking the dirt with one foot. Then Barney grinned broadly. Bob looked at him and started to laugh. The veteran receiver slapped him on the arm and said something else and they broke up, Dan trotting back to first, and Barney taking a slow walk to home plate.

Mickey Radnor stepped up and leveled his bat impatiently out in front of him. Wally, watching him across the flat stretch of green grass, felt the numbness in his shoulders again, as Bob prepared to pitch. The tall righthander was on the mound, his arms swinging loosely at his sides, and he seemed relaxed now.

Barney's coolness was infectious, Wally thought. What had they been smiling about up there? What could you say to a pitcher in a spot like this, with everything hanging in the balance while the world watched and waited?

Slowly Bob Doran stretched his arms upward, then brought them down and glanced around the bases where the three runners were cautiously increasing their leads. The quick hush fell upon the crowd as the pitcher paused. Then he whipped his arm around and stepped forward toward the batter, sending the shining white



"No eagle grips!"

sphere spinning up to the plate.

Wally saw Mickey Radnor's bat swing around in a wide arc as the runners sprinted down the base paths. He crouched lower, drawing in his breath with a gasping sound, ready to either jump or go down for it if it came, but in the same instant he heard the solid smack as it hit the catcher's mitt.

The runner from third came tearing across the plate, but the ball game was over. Stark crazy, hysterical pandemonium broke loose among the White Sox fans in the park.

Much later, when things had quieted down just a little, and they were finally getting ready to go into the showers, Wally had a chance to talk to Bob Doran. The White Sox star second baseman was curious about something.

"Tell me one thing," he said. "What did Barney say to you before the last pitch? You relaxed and put it right over the corner after that."

The lean-jawed young hero of the day had just finished having his picture taken for the hundredth time, and he looked tired from the strain of four drastic innings. But there was a happy glow in his gray eyes. "It wasn't anything much," he said. "As a matter of fact, Barney was talking about going fishing."

"Fishing!" Wally exclaimed incredulously, and he stared wide-eyed up into the tall pitcher's face.

"That's right," Bob told him. "We both like to fish between seasons and Barney asked me if I was going fishing for spotted weakfish down home in Alabama as soon as this was over. Then the idea of him standin' out there talkin' about that started me to laughin' and I guess I loosened up, because I put it right in where we wanted it, and Radnor couldn't even get a piece of it."

"Well, I'll be darned!" Wally Logan gasped.

THE BIG LEAGUES AND THE MINORS

In 1950, his fourth year in organized baseball, Whitey Ford was brought up from Kansas City of the American Association to the New York Yankees—and he proceeded to finish the season with the impressive record of nine victories and one defeat. This was a far better record, percentagewise, than the southpaw pitcher had ever attained in the lower loops.

So the inevitable question was put to him: "Whitey, what would you say is the greatest difference between the big leagues and the minors?"

Ford promptly answered: "The salary."

—HAROLD WINERIP

Albert Schweitzer, Great Missionary, Honored on Eightieth Birthday

Glenn Everett

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, universally hailed as one of the world's greatest living missionaries, is eighty years old. The Principality of Monaco has chosen this occasion for a set of four stamps commemorating the work of this great Christian author, physician, philosopher, and musician.

This is the first time that Roman Catholic Monaco has honored a Protestant leader on its postage. It is one of a series honoring great Christian leaders of the world. Since Monaco stamps faithfully reflect stamp collectors' interests, it is noteworthy that the perennial sports stamps of the little principality are giving way to serious religious subjects. Another feature of this set is that two of the stamps are trapezoidal in shape.

It was on January 14, 1875, that Albert Schweitzer was born in the village of Kaiserburg, Alsace, the son of a Lutheran minister. As his name indicates (it means "Swiss man") his ancestors came from Switzerland. Alsace was then occupied by Germany, but it is France that now claims him as a citizen.

Very early in his life it became evident that he was endowed with extraordinary genius. At the age of only eight he was playing the organ in his father's church. He was sent to the great Paris Conservatory where he not only became a celebrated organist, in great demand for concerts, but a brilliant writer as well. His two-volume work on Bach made him the world's recognized authority on the works of that great composer.

While studying for his doctorate in music, he also embarked on the study of philosophy and theology, and won doctor's degrees in both those fields. The University of Strasbourg was happy to welcome him as professor and director of its Protestant theological school. Suddenly, at the age of thirty, this brilliant young man astounded the world with the announcement that he was going to give up his concert tours, his academic posts, and all the honors and wealth coming to him in order to go to Africa as a missionary doctor.

His friends thought him stricken with some fanatical madness, but he disclosed that at twenty-one

he had taken a vow that he would devote himself to his music nine more years and then, out of thankfulness for a happy and carefree youth would devote the rest of his life to the service of humanity. He began the study of medicine to earn his fourth doctor's degree. At this time he married Helen Breslau, daughter of a history professor, Jewish by birth and Christian by conversion. On Good Friday, 1913, they embarked for French Equatorial Africa.

Taking literally Matthew 25:40, he sailed up the steaming Ogowe River to a little outpost in the jungle called Lambaréné. There he found some of the least of God's children, poverty-stricken, disease-ridden Negro tribes of the forest. He whitewashed an abandoned chicken shed and opened his hospital. He was the only doctor within 500 miles.

Tom-toms spread the word that a white "Oganga" (medicine man) was performing magic, killing his patients by cutting them open, then sewing them up, raising them from unconsciousness, and making them well, free from previous suffering. Prospective patients hurried to Lambaréné by dugout canoe. Along with his surgery, Dr. Schweitzer told the story of Jesus and his love for all men.

Soon the mission station had many converts and word of Dr. Schweitzer's success in his new field of labor began reaching the distant, outside world. Help finally came from old friends. Today Lambaréné Mission has forty buildings, for most of which Dr.

Schweitzer was the architect, contractor, and foreman.

Meanwhile, he continued writing. The world read with eager-



The new trapezoidal stamp issued by the principality of Monaco honoring Albert Schweitzer.

ness his books *Civilization and Ethics* (1925), *Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1926), and his great autobiography published in 1933. The world he had forsaken began to take increasing note of Dr. Schweitzer. Great honors have come to him despite his humble modesty. In 1952 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. When he came to Europe on a visit, thousands jammed into cathedrals to hear his organ concerts.

A recent newspaper story of Dr. Schweitzer's life was headlined "He Forfeited Fame for Faith." But did he? We are reminded of Matthew 19:29.

Has not the Lord rewarded Albert Schweitzer? Late in a tremendously fruitful life, surrounded by the devoted people of Lambaréné to whose lives he has brought light, comfort, help, and faith, can he not look back upon his decision to follow the strange call of the Lord and say it was a correct one?

Flight from Harm

Hal Borden

Could you run away from world disaster?

Stuart Blake thought you could.

He was frightened and running away from possible danger. But somehow it seemed the only logical course to take, so he tried not to call himself a coward.

The farm wasn't exactly the type Stuart Blake had had in mind when the idea to move himself and his family into the country took total possession of him. It seemed too big. All that cultivated land would have to lie idle and surrender once more to the onslaught of weeds and saplings. But the place was isolated and nestled between two fairly large mountains and that fact had become all-important.

It was situated far enough away from the large cities not to be considered as a target. In case some of the recent scare headlines about A-bombings, H-bombings, and the wiping out of whole cities proved to be prophetic, at least he and his family would be reasonably safe.

He knew it wouldn't be easy for

his wife, Doris, to give up the house in the city after they had worked so hard to pay for it, but survival was his consuming object now, and to achieve it there had to be sacrifice. Doris had at first scoffed at his fears, then later, when he had convinced her he was serious, she had begun acting quiet. Once or twice he had looked up to catch her studying him intently. By persistence he had worn her down to his way of thinking, and she had weakened to the point of agreeing to look around for a place with him.

"Someday," he had told her, "you and the two children will thank me for my foresight."

She hadn't answered.

He looked around him now, at the old-fashioned large rooms, the immense farm kitchen, and the unrelated muddle of old furniture. The whole interior would need renovating. The generations of children born and brought up within the dwelling had pulled

Hal Borden describes himself as "a displaced New Jerseyite who likes to roam around." Much of the time he lives in an old farmhouse in Ossipee, N.H., where he writes fiction and gags and plans hunting and fishing trips.

the usual capers with crayons and toys, and the results of their healthy exuberance were everywhere.

He found a large brick-lined room in the cellar where they could stock in plenty of canned food—just in case. They might even survive a blast down there.

He was blinking his eyes against the bright midday sun when he heard Mrs. Wilkins and Doris chatting as they walked toward him. The present owner was doing most of the talking with Doris just nodding when the occasion called for some expression. Little Tom had his sister's hand and now and then would stop to add a stray flower to the crushed bouquet she was carrying.

They appeared happy enough to him, and it pleased him because he wanted always to be able to see them that way. If his fears were well founded they would retain that chance of at least being alive for some time yet. Could anyone condemn him for this?

"Like the place?" he asked Doris as she climbed the porch steps and stood beside him. If he knew her she wouldn't say anything against the place in front of Mrs. Wilkins; so he waited patiently for her to answer.

"The barn is immense," she said softly, "and there's an herb garden right behind the house."

He realized she was just repeating the high-lights Mrs. Wilkins had pointed out to her, because he was sure she didn't know a thing about barns or herbs. Neither did he for that matter, but

he hoped a show of interest would make her feel better.

"That's fine," he said, "and I've been looking over the house again. The kids can have separate rooms. They'll love that."

Doris nodded but with no enthusiasm over his planning.

"It is an awfully large place," she said softly.

"We were always thankful for that fact," Mrs. Wilkins' voice crept to them in fond reminiscence. We had nine children, you know, and that called for lots of space."

"And how are all the children?" Doris asked with the first spark of interest Stuart had seen her display since they had left the city.

"Fine," came the answer. "Of course, they're all scattered now and there's at least one in nearly every branch of service."

Stuart Blake listened thoughtfully as Doris took advantage of the slight hesitation and asked quickly. "But won't you hate to leave the farm? Surely you must have grown fond of it after all these years."



"Oh, but that's true enough," Mrs. Wilkins answered; then in an effort to clarify her feelings she added, "That's really the reason we are leaving."

A look of complete puzzlement forged itself on Stuart's face. "I'm afraid I don't quite understand. Surely the place is safe enough, yet you love the place so much you're leaving it."

"Precisely," she smiled in accord with his words. "The way my husband and I both figure is that being fond of something doesn't give us the right to possess it and eventually destroy it. And that's just what would happen to the farm after all these years of fighting off the wilds. We're getting too old, too weak to fight them."

Stuart began nodding slowly, and just as slowly the full meaning of the woman's words began to seep to him and knit themselves together.

"There is always the duty of responsibility attached to the

things we love," he heard the words come to him.

He watched as the smile again filled the woman's face and she spoke to them as though imparting some great talked-over secret.

"We think farming needs to be done for the good of all, Mr. Blake. And that's why we're willing to sell the place to a young couple like yourselves."

Stuart Blake looked at Doris, then back to Mrs. Wilkins. The embarrassment nurtured by guilt welled up within him until it nearly proved stifling. His hands became wet, and beads of sweat put a sheen on his forehead. He suddenly knew what Doris had been searching for in his very countenance. His only hope now was that though she may have seen fear there, she hadn't seen cowardice.

He felt the slight pressure of her hand on his arm and slowly he reached out and drew her to him. He wanted to say something, but words wouldn't come.

Then suddenly he seemed to visualize the futility of flight and knew that no matter how hard or far he ran, he still would meet himself face to face at every corner.

That's when he heard himself speaking in a voice that sounded suddenly so sure and so strong in the flint-hard clearness of the afternoon.

"We'd like a day or two to talk it over, Mrs. Wilkins," he said. The face of the elder woman showed her disappointment as clearly as though he'd said, "No sale."



"It's something to think about—us with 2,000 hard-boiled eggs on our hands if an atom bomb should be dropped close by."

In Honor Of MR. B. WEEVIL

Harold Helfer

Enterprise, Alabama, is proud of quite a few facts: the fact that it is a clean-cut community with new-looking stores and freshly scrubbed homes; the fact that some 10,000 citizens are generally alert and active; the fact that it has a soft shoe factory and two shirt-making plants.

But the thing of which the town of Enterprise is proudest is a monument right in the center of town. This is not only because it is obviously quite a handsome monument but because, as its residents will lose no time in telling you, it is the only monument in the world dedicated to the boll weevil.

Now, in case you're wondering why in the world anybody would want to erect a monument to, of all individuals, a boll weevil, it seems the explanation stems from a story.

Back in 1915, as they had for years, practically every farmer in that area had the acreage around his homestead knee-deep in cotton. Then along came Mr. B. Weevil. Soon the cotton fields were knee-deep in relatives and friends of this pesky insect. Before the season was over, they had laid low sixty per cent of the crop.

It was a terrible blow, but the

next year the farmers were determined to lick the ravenous little fellow. Instead of retreating at all, the people in this southeastern Alabama community defiantly planted a bumper cotton crop and then proceeded to make war on the insects by filling the fields with calcium arsenate and other poisons. But the indefatigable wee-

How a little town handled a handicap

vils just seemed to treat that as a dessert and went on to the main course of the cotton. Less than a third of the crop was harvested. Nearly everyone faced bankruptcy, with the bankers and merchants holding a lot of unpayable notes.

Something had to be done and the folks around Enterprise began to capitulate left and right to



the boll weevil. They began to plant corn, potatoes, peanuts, sugar cane, and hay, and paid more attention to handling cattle and hogs.

To the great surprise of everyone, while the recent immigrant weevils from Mexico continued to raise havoc with most of the South, Enterprise found itself prospering as she never had before. The people learned the lesson of diversified farming the hard way, but the results were an unqualified blessing. The area not only managed to keep its head well above water year in and year out, but went on to become "The Peanut Center of the World," with the world's largest peanut butter mill.

So grateful were the citizens of Enterprise to Mr. B. Weevil for forcing them out of their utter dependence on the cotton crop and into their resulting new way of life, that they never encountered a boll weevil again without feeling a little sense of gratitude. There came a day when people began contributing money liberally from their prosperous crops, to a monument in honor of the insect, and it was erected in December, 1919.

There this quite grandiloquent monument to a persnickety pest still stands with its inscription: "IN PROFOUND APPRECIATION OF THE BOLL WEEVIL AND WHAT IT HAS DONE AS THE HERALD OF PROSPERITY . . ."

ANIMAL CRACKERETTES

Jackrabbits have been recorded speeding at 52 miles per hour.

The dog population of the United States is estimated at 22,000,000.

The strength of the average horse is equal to that of five men.

Afghanistan natives obtain butter from the tails of sheep.

Silkworms generally spin their cocoons only when there is absolute quiet.

The albatross bird fills up its young to capacity, then abandons it, knowing that by the time it has used up its reserve, it will be able to fend for itself.

A wasp makes 110 wing strokes a second.

The blackpoll warbler sings the highest of all bird notes, his song containing notes as high as 12,500 cycles per second.

There are more than 800 types of geese.

—HAROLD HELFER

"... This Is My Own My Native Land..."

From The Air Defender by Chaplain (Major) Wilbur R. Hensley.

It's home . . . it's a hot dog and a malt at the corner drugstore . . . it's the Saturday night date with that little red head . . . it's getting her home before 12 o'clock 'cause her pop said so . . . it's the movie where you can hold hands . . . it's the trip to the mountains with the gang . . . it's finding a good fishing hole and catching your limit . . . it's a good case of sunburn at the beach . . . it's having fun with the young people's group at the church . . . it's the summer conference camps . . . it's the Junior Prom . . . it's the smell of the Everglades . . . it's Hollywood, Chi., the "Big Town," Carrison Junction and Tie Siding . . . it's fried chicken, mince pie, real milk . . . it's home cookin' . . . it's politics . . . it's sports . . . it's everything thrown into one large mixer, and it comes out America . . . Sure you want to go back and you will when the time comes . . . but in the meantime you are not over here on an oriental vacation . . . in other words you are not here to sit around and do just what you have to do and no more . . . remember, you are Americans . . . and an American is supposed to have more than one idea in his head at one time. If you don't know how to do the job you'll find out how without waiting for the Hanchos to come and tell you how to do it. You're an American soldier, airman, marine, or sailor. You come from a people that carved a garden out of a desert . . . that defied impassable mountains to find a home in the wilderness . . . a people that were tough, who knew only one word, "forward" . . . fighters for justice and opportunity . . . a people of faith with a rifle in one hand and a Bible in the other . . . that's what you come from . . . don't forget.

Sure you've got a job to do . . . you may not like what you are doing, but do it, you'll be a better man for it. And something else, be kind and understanding of the people you live among. They're a good people and you're their friends . . . *but that doesn't mean you're supposed to go native.* You're Americans . . . keep that in your mind. And, before I forget, that little girl . . . off Second and Main back home . . . you know the one I mean . . . she's waiting for you . . . she's pretty hard to beat . . . you're going home someday . . . and you're an American . . . and that's that.

So just do a little recollecting and thinking it over. It all sums itself up something like this . . . you say to yourself, "I'm an American. That being the case, I'll act like an American—a good American."

International Fellowship

Congratulations—slightly late—on the first birthday of the most unique group of which we know, the United Fellowship of Ansbach, Germany. Wish we had a thousand more like it.

In February, 1945, Americans from the Signal School and German youth from Ansbach, thirty-two strong, organized this international fellowship. They chose co-chairmen, one American and one German, a secretary, and a chairman of arrangements, for three-month terms. Ever since, they have operated, under the sponsorship of Chaplain James S. Griffes, with outstanding success.

Shortly after their organization they were joined by a group under the leadership of Chaplain William R. Hett.

The picture shows their first birthday party when over sixty young people—about half American and half German—had a special dinner to celebrate. In the background Chaplain Hett is standing talking to Chaplain Griffes.

The group soon outgrew the facilities of both the Signal School chapel and the Evangelical Parish House. So they remodeled an old chapel into a Chaplain's Center.

(Continued on Page 32, bottom)



United Fellowship

The Stars and Stripes

The American flag will be flying from flag poles and front porches all over our nation on July 4th as a symbol of everything that is America. We'll be honoring the flag not for itself but for "the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In school you were taught the meaning of the red, the white, and the blue. You know the symbolism of the stars and the stripes. But I want to suggest two meanings which your teachers very likely missed.

The thirteen stripes stand for the original thirteen colonies, but they also stand for that which is eternally unchangeable in life. The fact that a certain group of thirteen colonies banded together to form the United States of America will remain forever unchanged. No event of history or edict of man can alter it.

There are some things in life that man can never change, the order of the planets, the song of a cardinal, the love of a man for a woman, the search of man's mind for God. When we become worried about a drive to destroy religion or the terror of the atom bomb, we need to remember that there are eternal things that even modern man can never change.

But there are also forty-eight stars in the flag. When I was born there were only forty-six. Congress may soon change it to forty-nine or fifty. Here is a symbol of that in life which is forever changing. Where I know and love a flag with six rows of eight stars, my grandson may learn to honor a flag with five rows of ten stars. His flag will be as right for his day as mine is for my day.

The truly intelligent man stands with his feet firmly planted upon that which is unchangeable and works with head, heart, and hands to improve that which is changeable.



—Joe Dana

I Am The Light of the World

THE OPENING THOUGHT:

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

THE INVOCATION:

"Let there be light, Lord God of Hosts,
Let there be wisdom on the earth!
Let broad humanity have birth!
Let there be deeds, instead of boasts!"

THE OPENING HYMN: "Lord of All Being, Throned Afar."

THE SCRIPTURE: John 8:12-18.

THE MEDITATION:

To burn for Thee, that is our basic prayer down underneath all other prayers. That is, we're trying to mean it . . . to face what it might mean if we took our sparks and helped change situations, circumstances, associations—in other words, to reckon what burning actually costs. The candle knows. Plenty of people know . . . Albert Schweitzer, Kagawa, Dr. Ida Scudder and even some who live in our block.

Light is an interesting subject. From the earliest beginnings man has ever sought to lift the powers of darkness. At first crude torches and bonfires furnished light. Next came candles followed by oil lamps. Many of these were just wicks dipped in oil. Then came the kerosene lamps and gas lights and finally the electric light. Each was a step forward over what had been used before. Today many improvements are still being made upon the electric light to add to our comfort. In one way, however, all of these lights are alike, for none can burn indefinitely. Even the improved light bulb and fluorescent tube burn for a certain period and then go out.

Only the Light of the World has never gone out and has withstood every possible test. This magnificent light is the Light of Jesus Christ—God's Light. This light carries with it an everlasting guarantee. Even though it comes so highly recommended, there are many who refuse to appropriate it, while in other parts of the world there are those who are eagerly awaiting its coming. This light seems even stronger when we know that it is already within each person. In some cases it has not

been turned on, while in others it is burning with various degrees of brightness.

How can we know if our light is burning, you ask? Surely if the light of Jesus Christ is aglow within our hearts:

We are thoughtful persons doing good for others at every turn.

We are busy persons giving of ourselves in our homes, churches, schools and communities.

We are spiritual persons, reading our Bible, for we know it is God's message to us.

We are praying persons—praying not only for our own needs but also for the needs of others.

THE POEM:

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before Thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no luster of our own.
Grant us Thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee,
Till all Thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

THE PRAYER:

Look upon us, O Lord, and let all the darkness of our souls vanish before the beams of Thy brightness. Fill us with holy love, and open to us the treasures of Thy wisdom. All our desire is known unto Thy wisdom. All our desire is known unto Thee, therefore, perfect what Thou hast begun, and what Thy spirit has wakened in us to ask in prayer. We seek Thy face; turn Thy face unto us and show us Thy glory. Then shall our longings be satisfied, and our lives shall burn and shine for Thee. Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN: "Lead, Kindly Light."

THE BENEDICTION:

Now may the light that shone in Jesus Christ our Lord,
Shine in our hearts and minds by the indwelling word;
And may the radiance which faith and hope restore,
Be and abide with us both now and evermore. Amen.

From "I Am and Ye Are" by permission of Marion Van Horne

ANSWERED PRAYER

He asked for strength that he might achieve; he was made weak that he might obey.

He asked for health that he might do greater things; he was given infirmity that he might do better things.

He asked for riches that he might be happy; he was given poverty that he might be wise.

He asked for power that he might have the praise of men; he was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.

He asked for all things that he might enjoy life; he was given Life that he might enjoy all things.

He has received nothing that he asked for, all that he hoped for. His prayer is answered. He is most blest.

(Reprinted by permission of Fleming H. Revell from When a Man Prays by Arthur A. Rouner)

(Continued from Page 28)

They started to meet every other week, but soon found that they were meeting every Sunday evening from 1900 to 2200 hours. The program consists of a worship period, a speaker or discussion, and a social hour. Drawing upon the resources of both the school and the community, they have a wonderful variety of programs. At Easter they arranged a colored egg hunt for the 114 children in a local orphanage. The average attendance now is between fifty and sixty every Sunday night.

Chaplain Griffes says, "This group has brought the best American and German youth together, an accomplishment greatly to be desired. Since this is a school, there is quite a turnover and a constantly changing group, but we find men coming back from all over Germany on week-ends to keep their contacts here. Others have gone back to their home units to encourage the organizing of similar groups. It is a great thing for our young men." We heartily agree, Chaplain. Congratulations!

Jonah and Ecclesiastes

JOE DANA

Introduction

What Do You Do?

At first sight it may seem strange to pair up the Book of Jonah and the book called Ecclesiastes in one month's studies. They do not seem to have much in common. Jonah is one of the "minor prophets." Ecclesiastes is one of the "writings." One book is almost exclusively prose; the other has large sections of poetry. Jonah deals mostly with the varied experiences of the prophet; while Ecclesiastes sets forth the philosophy of the preacher.

However, a second look will reveal enough similarity to warrant their pairing. Both books were written to raise and, in some sense, answer the questions that all men must someday ask: What do you do with God (Jonah), and What do you do with life (Ecclesiastes)? They do not furnish an answer which is sufficient for the Christian, but like much of the Old Testament, they point in the direction in which the answer is to be found.

A second thing that these books have in common is their origin in

the same period of Hebrew or Jewish life. In order to get them placed, we need to look at a few dates in Palestinian history. In 538 B.C. the Hebrews returned to Jerusalem from their long exile in Babylon. During the decade following 520, at the urging of Haggai, the temple was restored under the leadership of Zerubbabel. About 440 Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem and the walls of the city were restored. A generation later the foundations for legalistic Judaism were laid during the ministry of Ezra. During the last half of the fourth century the break came between the Jews and the Samaritans which caused their enmity even up to the time of Jesus, and all of Palestine was conquered by Alexander the Great. After Alexander died in 323, during a campaign in Babylon, his empire was split up three ways and Palestine became a part of the empire of Ptolemy.

It was shortly after this that the book of Jonah was written by a Jewish scholar in an attempt to

show what the relationships ought to be between Judah and the rest of this heterogeneous empire stretching from southern Egypt around the "fertile crescent" to Babylon. It spoke to a people who were prone to turn in upon themselves and hate the rest of the world. It tried to show them that God couldn't take this viewpoint.

The author of the book is unknown. The only other prophet by the name Jonah is mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25, but he lived and preached in the Northern Kingdom at least four hundred years earlier. There is little doubt that the book was written as a unit by one author, with the exception of the poem in 2:2-9 which is most probably a later addition.

After a century of rule by the Egyptians under Ptolemy, Palestine was conquered by the Syrians and became part of the Seleucid empire. It was against the oppressive rule of the Syrians and especially the attempt of Antiochus IV to suppress the Jewish religion that the Maccabaeans revolted in 168. Under the able leadership of Judas (The Hammerer) a measure of independence was gained. Jonathan, his brother, became king in 160 and was followed in 142 by Simon. It is during this period of nearly half a century of political and religious freedom that the writings included in our Old Testament canon come to a close, and we enter into the "intertestamental period."

However, it was during the closing years of the Egyptian rule (250-200) that some unknown Hebrew sage wrote the book

called Ecclesiastes. The author is not mentioned by name anywhere in the book. He introduces himself as "Koheleth, son of David, king of Jerusalem." Because everyone knows that the son of David who was king in Jerusalem was Solomon, it is obvious that in these last two phrases the author is following the custom of his day in impersonating some famous historical character to give his writing more authority. Since his work is philosophical, it is only natural that he would want to give it the authority of a great philosopher.

The word "Koheleth" causes some trouble in translation. The Septuagint used the Greek word which, coming down through the Latin Vulgate, has become the name of the book. The English translations have followed this word and have translated it "preacher." However, most of us who are ministers would be a little happier with the original meaning of the Hebrew word "koheleth," which is "master of an assembly." His rather hopeless attitude toward life does not seem to square well with the attitude we expect of preachers.

Because the book has a tendency to jump from idea to idea with no smooth transition or apparent connection, some people have been convinced that it must have been edited over and over during history. However, because I know so many people who wander like that in conversation and so many preachers who preach like that, I have no difficulty believing that, with the exception of a few passages, it is the work of one author.

The Book of Jonah

Lesson One

For the week beginning July 3

When God Gives Orders

Chapters 1 and 2

One of the bad results of the way that most of us have studied the Bible in church school is that we have often learned the things of lesser importance about people and events and have not learned the things of real importance. So it is with Jonah. We have learned the least important thing about him: the great fish which we have commonly and wrongly called a whale. We have missed the important fact that Jonah was a man under orders from God.

Yes, that was Jonah's trouble. He had orders from God to go to Nineveh, capital of Assyria. He didn't want to go. In fact, he had very good reasons for not going. It was in a foreign country, and he would rather stay at home. It was the capital of the most hated enemy of his country.

When a fellow has orders from God and doesn't want to obey those orders, what shall he do? Every Christian faces that problem. We need to try to find an answer.

Some people seem to have decided that waiting until you have orders from God is a bad technique; you run the risk of getting orders you won't like. Their method is to make as certain as possible that they don't get any orders.

Any fellow in service knows that one of the best ways of making sure that you won't get orders

is to stay away from the places in which orders might be given out. Then you run only the risk of getting caught on the fly. These people follow the same reasoning. They stay away from churches and ministers; sources from which God's orders might be expected to come. They stay strictly away from Bible reading, because the Bible has a reputation for conveying God's orders.

The second method which we all know is to play dumb—just don't understand, and you'll be fairly safe from orders. Some folks who attend church and read the Bible have a way of doing it so that they won't understand. That way they can duck any responsibility for acting in accord with what might be said.

How often is it that you and I do our best to keep from learning what God might think of our projects or plans because we are afraid that he might veto them? Do you suppose that is the reason that we so stubbornly refuse to ask: What would Jesus do? But if you can't avoid knowing what God's orders are, then what can you do?

Well, you can make excuses. Remember, in Exodus 3, how Moses stood in front of the burning bush and heard orders to go to Pharaoh? He started to offer excuses—he was no speaker, they wouldn't believe him. Remember another time

when Jesus told a story about some people who were invited to a banquet and immediately made excuses—some new oxen, a new wife, a new field? (Luke 14) Jesus was pretty rough on them.

Yet we make just as silly excuses when God calls us, through someone else, to do something. We can't usher because we can't walk straight; can't be secretary because we can't write; can't witness because we don't make speeches. Other people get very tired of our lame excuses; I wonder if God doesn't, too.

Then, of course you can always try the dodge of explaining away the orders—making out that God doesn't really mean what he seems to say so plainly. This can get pretty ridiculous at times, but it is commonly used by Christians I know. If Jonah had been one of these he would have insisted that God didn't want him to go to Nineveh but to Jerusalem; that God had just mixed up the cities.

This gymnastic thought process probably is most commonly used with regard to proportionate giving or tithing. The Bible seems to be quite clear in its insistence that man is truly a steward of God in all that he receives and that a proper part of that stewardship involves living on one portion of the receipts and using another portion to do part of God's work through church and charity. The ways by which people can explain away this idea—because to accept it would "cost them money"—are quite amazing.

We use this same technique of explaining away when we face the Ten Commandments. We in-

sist that God didn't mean snitching, cooning, moonlight requisitioning, scrounging, and the like when he said, "You shall not steal." We are a little put out with Jesus when he insists that "You shall not commit adultery" means that you shall not look at a woman lustfully; we had it all figured out another way. We contend that the commandment against profanity doesn't say anything about such words as "gad," "gee," "heck," and "damn." These Ten Commandments are much easier to live with if we can cut down most of their demands by explaining them away; so we do our best.

If you come right up against God's orders and can't figure out any dodge, you can always do what Jonah did—deliberately disobey. There are risks in this. One's conscience has a way of making it hard for the fellow who runs away to Tarshish. But there are many people who are convinced that, since God wants us to be men and not robots, he isn't likely to force us to do something if we are stubborn enough in refusing. Many people seem to be willing to take the chance that they'll get by with their disobedience and that God will give their orders to someone else. We ought never to forget that when we refuse to obey the orders of God we give up the privilege of working on his side. The fellow who refuses to work with God can hardly avoid finding himself one day working with the Devil.

However, if we are going to deserve the name "Christian"—which seems to be just another way of saying "Christlike"—is it

not necessary for us to face the orders of God in the same fashion that Jesus did? Can we set up our own standards and methods and honestly call ourselves Christians?

How did Jesus do it?

First, we have to recognize that Jesus never tried to duck any orders from the Father. The exact opposite was true; he sought in every way possible to receive orders and guidance. There was daily prayer. There was listening to the voice of God in other people and in nature. In every way possible Christ sought to know the will of God for his life. Instead of setting up roadblocks to keep the orders from getting through to him, he used every channel he knew to receive orders. This seemed the right way for him. Certainly it is the right way for us.

Once the order came through to him, what did Christ do? You can get the best picture of this by looking at Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of his arrest. Here he is, like Jonah, a man under orders from God. They are orders he doesn't like because they are to cost him his earthly life when there is so much to be done and enjoyed. Jonah ran away from his unwelcome orders, but not Jesus.

Jesus did what any sincere person would do—he recognized his own desires. God certainly doesn't want his children to act like wooden dummies and dumbly accept his orders as if they were of no real concern to them. Prayer is for talking things over, and Jesus prayed. He asked that, if possible, the orders be changed and another way be found. Certainly any

Questions for Discussion

1. How are you going to know God's orders when you get them? Remember the story of the farm lad who dreamed the letters G.P.C. and decided they meant "Go Preach Christ" when all the neighbors knew they meant "Go Plow Corn."
2. Take the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) and list all the reasons people give for not carrying out this order.
3. Try putting yourself in God's place and figure out what you would do if one of your children or your churches tried the methods of ducking your orders which we have discussed.
4. What orders do you think God is giving his church today? What are his orders for your group?

Christian faced with demands he doesn't like has a perfect right to talk it over with God. In fact, he would be foolish if he didn't.

But Jesus didn't stop there. He immediately recognized that, if the orders of God had to stand—and he was rightly confident that God would change them if he could—and it was a choice between his desires and God's plans; then God's way was the only way. His whole life had meaning only as it was a part of God's purpose. He could not deny his very reason for being by trying to set his own desires above the will of God. Jesus knew that he could only carry out the purpose for which he was sent to earth and life by following the orders of God. Honestly now, don't we all know that, too?

The Book of Jonah

Lesson Two

For the week beginning July 10

When God Won't Agree With You

Chapters 3 and 4

Jonah is envied by many preachers. Where else can you find a record like his? Most preachers work hard on their sermon week after week, preach it on Sunday with all the skill and conviction they can command, and then have a blue Monday because they cannot see any results in either the attitudes or actions of those who hear. Not so with Jonah. He went to a city he hated. He walked into the city repeating over and over five Hebrew words which we have translated into "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." No explanation. No arguments. Only a threat.

Yet his results were amazing, almost beyond belief. People believed him with absolute seriousness. From the lowliest servant all the way up to the king, every man, woman, and child changed his way of life. Repentance was so complete that they even included the animals in its external evidences. The new order was so honest and so universal that it convinced God of their sincerity, and he accepted their repentance. Preachers today would give their right arm for that kind of results. Jonah ought to have been almost beside himself with happiness over his success.

But it was not so. Jonah was so angry he could die! He was not only angry at the people for repenting, but he was even more

angry at God for accepting their repentance and saving them. He had said that Nineveh would be destroyed, and he ardently hoped it would.

Now it isn't going to happen. God has decided to save these people, and Jonah is terribly angry. He feels that God has both double-crossed him and made a liar out of him. At the same time God has robbed him of vengeance upon his enemies. He went out to a hill outside the city to sulk. We get the impression that he thought that when God saw how angry he was, he would change his mind.

What do you do when God won't agree with you, when he won't play the game your way?

Certainly the place to start is to decide fully and firmly that God knows best. You say that everyone knows that? No, I don't believe they do. When you are a sophomore in high school there is nothing quite so funny and ridiculous as the idea that "papa knows best." He may have picked up a few odds and ends of knowledge which he uses to make a living, but when it comes to knowing the way around he's a real-gone oblong square. His ideals and know-how may have been okay for dumb folks back in the horse-and-buggy days, but he needs to get hep that this is the 20th Century.

Well, a lot of grown-up, adult people still think of God as a big

old man way off in the sky somewhere. They think of him as a sort of long-distance grandpa, and when you say to them, "God knows best," they simply can't believe it. He may have known what was best for Noah, or Abraham, or even David because that was a long time ago when God was much younger and there were a lot fewer people to worry about. But now, so they reason, there are nearly three billion people in the world and God hasn't been paying very close attention lately; so how could he possibly know what is best for me?

Only when we understand and believe that there is no bigness in the world that is not just a part of the vastness created by God; that there is no knowledge or wisdom which does not stem from the amazing knowledge and wisdom that planned the universe; that the time and space to which man is largely bound have no essential meaning except as they are set over against the timelessness and infinity of God—only then will we be willing to admit, finally and for all things, that God knows best. Until that time we shall continue to be unhappy and rebellious every time God "crosses up our plans." Until then we'll find ourselves, every now and then, sitting out on the hill with Jonah, mad as hops at God. Then, if we stop raving long enough to listen, we are likely to hear God ask, "Do you do well to be angry?" (4:4)

But admitting that God is right is not enough for the Christian. We can admit that God is right and then go on to say, "But if he wants to do it that way, he'll have

to do it without me. He can just get someone else." No, we don't actually say this—that would be too impertinent. We just sit down and refuse to play ball, that's all.

We see this refusing to play ball going on all around us in both society and the church.

But you say, "Wait a minute; aren't you confusing God's decision with the decision of a group of people in a church?" There we run smack into a very real problem: How are we going to know how God wants it done? How can we tell how he does want things to happen? It seems to me that there are at least four ways.

How did Jonah find out that God wasn't going to destroy Nineveh? The Bible doesn't say that God told Jonah. Jonah went out on the hill and sat there to wait for the big fire or earthquake—the big day when Nineveh and all its people would be destroyed. He waited, and waited, and waited—and nothing happened. This is one way God has of revealing his decisions. The framers of the Constitution fixed it so that, in certain circumstances, the President could veto a bill simply by doing nothing about it. You will remember that Paul says that he prayed over and over that this "thorn in the flesh" might be removed from him. Nothing happened, and he finally realized that God had decided against it. Most of us fellows look back to a year when we wanted a bicycle for Christmas. We hounded the folks for it. We prayed to God for it. Then on Christmas—no bike. Both the folks and God had decided, "No."

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One cannot read through the Bible without discovering another way that God reveals his way. That is through the thoughts and suggestions of true prophets. Very often these prophets have felt like lone souls crying in the wilderness, but the future has proven that their way was right and their influence was felt.

Throughout the history of men's living together there has developed another method of knowing God's will. Our democratic way of life is built upon it. It is not a theory which says that the crowd is always right or that the majority is always on God's side. All of us could cite times and events to prove that this is not true. But our church life and governmental life—at their best—are built upon the idea that the group, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will make decisions that are in line with God's purpose. Our theory is that, when the group votes for the purpose of discovering God's will, God will speak through the group.

There was yet another way by which Jonah could have known God's answer if he had been interested. The idea of destroying a few hundred thousand people for the entertainment of one man runs brutally counter to love. To destroy the people of Nineveh as a just punishment for their horrible sinfulness is one thing; to do it because Jonah wants to get even with enemies or to preserve Jonah's personal prestige is quite another. One is possible for God; the other isn't.

We could determine the answer to many of our plans and schemes

Questions for Discussion

1. It has been contended many times that preaching that threatens people is more effective than preaching which convinces. What do you think?
 2. If God seems to be saying "No" to your plans for a vocation, what is the wise course to take?
 3. Take several different jobs and see how they measure up when analyzed by the love of God for men. Why do some fail? Should a Christian enter a vocation that doesn't measure up?
 4. Under what circumstances would you feel justified in going against the will of the group? Is it ever right to refuse to make a decision one way or the other?
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by simply seeing what they look like in the light of the love of God. We believe that God is a God of love—perfect love—forgiving love—redeeming love. We simply cannot expect him ever to go along with a scheme that goes against that love.

Again, as in the first lesson, the Christian finds his way by the attitude and advice of Jesus Christ. One day Christ staked his life in front of a mob on his devotion to God's way: "If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me, believe the works" (John 10:37). Another day he gave this advice to his followers; advice that is just as good for us who are his present-day disciples: "I must work the works of him who sent me, while it is yet day; night comes when no man can work" (John 9:4).

What Does Man Gain?

This preacher no sooner gets through introducing himself than he jumps to the core of his philosophy. He asks, "What does a man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?" The King James version asks the question this way, "What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?" Today we would probably ask, "What's there in it for me?" Or perhaps we would demand, "What's the percentage?"

The author asks this question eight more times in his short essay. He uses three Hebrew words: *yithron*, *kishron*, and *yother* which are synonyms in the same way that our words "profit," "net gain," and "advantage" are alike in meaning. He asks the question so many times simply because this is the vital question to which he is seeking an answer. It would be interesting to discover just how many times each year every one of us asks this same question in one form or another. We ask it constantly because we are so greatly concerned to find an answer.

Next week we shall discuss how our man went about seeking his answer and we shall examine the answer at which he arrived to discover whether or not it will do for us. But it is very necessary that we first look at his question: What is the profit?

That's an interesting word:

"profit." It comes from two Latin words which mean literally "the make for," but which come closer to meaning "to go forward" or "to get somewhere." We easily recognize that we use the word in this same sense. The word is most familiar to us in a business setting. It is not enough that a business keep even with the board. It is a major tragedy if a business shows a loss; we feel that a business must make a profit. So, when a business is losing money we say it is going behind; when it shows a profit, we say it is getting ahead.

Koheleth is neither the first nor the last to ask this question about life. Borrow the chaplain's concordance and look up the words "profit," "advantage," and "gain," and you will be surprised as I was at the variety of people in the Bible who asked this question. In all three of the synoptic gospels Jesus is recorded as having asked this same question: "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (Matt. 16:26, Mark 8:36, and Luke 9:25)

Denominations and even local churches have a tendency to judge the health of the church and the work of the minister by whether or not the annual report shows a net gain. Yet we could probably all name instances where a church showed a nice net gain each year, but spiritually was so unchristian

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that it must be counted by God as a dead loss.

Today we face the question: Is this the proper basis for the judging of life? Is it right for a young man choosing a vocation to ask regarding it, "What is the profit?" Should a man in old age look back over his life and rate himself a success or failure on the basis of what profit he can show? Do we want our life judged by others on this basis?

Perhaps our answer depends upon what sort of profit we are talking about. Well, what kinds are there?

Very naturally, because of our heredity or environment, our first thought is of money profit. This is the kind of profit we expect a business to show. This is also the kind of profit that multitudes of people want their life to show, and they will consider themselves failures if it doesn't. If Dad died with a thousand dollars in the bank, we are determined to leave an estate of a hundred thousand. If we inherited a business worth a million, we work like fury to pass on the business with a net worth of ten million. If we were born in a log cabin, we set a mansion on Park Avenue as our goal. Many a couple has looked back at the time of their golden wedding anniversary and judged their life together on the basis of the net gain in wealth.

Some seek yet another kind of profit in life—the profit named "advantage." The gaining of advantage is sometimes just a part of the larger purpose of making money out of the advantage. But there are times when just the op-

posite is true—a man makes money in order to gain an advantage. We like to have power over people and things. We relish ordering other people around and making them do our will. We enjoy defeating others in contests of wit and strength. To be perfectly honest about it, don't we enjoy the advantage that is indicated by "Dr." or "Rev." in front of our names, or stripes on our sleeves? How thrilled we are with the advantage we gain when our new 160 h. p. car outruns the little 1945 model at the green light. This is the profit that many of us want life to give to us, and the means we use to achieve advantage are both varied and subtle.

Then there are those who seek to gain from life a profit in personal enrichment, not of money but of ability and character. Again this profit we seek comes from many sources and shows itself in various ways. I go to the "Hi-Fi Fair" and realize that the milling crowds are seeking personal enrichment through more complete appreciation of the nuances of great music. At the library we see people who are finding profit in life by gaining an ever greater knowledge and understanding of nature, history, or philosophy. People go to the Flower Show or wander through beautiful gardens to enrich life with the beauty of nature. Americans travel all over the world as tourists and find that life is fuller and more interesting because of the places and things they have seen.

The man who cannot say that his life is richer in knowledge, understanding, appreciation, abil-

ity, and character at sixty than it was at twenty is to be greatly pitied. Yet there are many in our land who are poorer in these things when they die than they were when they left high school. The profit that they have sought from life was not greatness of character. On the other hand there are monastics who have achieved great enrichment of their personal life, but have ended up with a beautiful character set away like a souvenir, useless to society and of very little satisfaction to themselves.

Which brings us to the fourth kind of profit people seek from life. Multitudes in the past and the present have sought to live in such fashion that their life will show a profit for the world. This seems to have been a characteristic of Christians from the beginning. We express this desire in many ways, the most common of which is, "I'd like to help make the world a better place to live." Each of us could name someone we have known either by reputation or in person who wanted his life to show this profit. These people never expect to make a lot of money. Often they live and work in far-off, unknown places and at lowly tasks. They would rather be used by others to accomplish noble ends than to boss people around, but they are solid in their determination not to be used to destroy good and truth. Usually they don't ask for any special credit for what good they do, satisfied to have been able to leave the world a little better, wiser, or holier than they found it. Strangely enough, these are the

Questions for Discussion

1. Analyze these four kinds of profit that men seek. Add others if you can. Then decide which one or which combination is right for the Christian.
2. List people, living or dead, who have fitted into each of these four groups. Which of these persons do you consider most admirable?
3. You expect to choose your life-work. What will the kind of profit you seek have to do with your choice?
4. How do you go about changing the ends for which folks live? What can the church do about it? What can you as a Christian do about it?

people whom you are likely to find in the pages of any true and honest history.

All people seek to make life pay some kind of profit. I have not tried to indicate which profit is the highest motive or the most desirable; that is a judgment the group should make. Koheleth wanted a certain type of profit, and he judged life on the basis of his desire. He came up with the answer, "All is vanity and a striving after wind." He repeats this answer some forty times in the book. But we are left with the question, "Would his answer not have been different and far more satisfying if he had sought a different profit?" The profit we ask from life and by which we shall judge our success or failure will make all the difference in the answer life gives us.

Ecclesiastes

Lesson Four

For the week beginning July 24

How Do You Make Life Pay Off?

Koheleth is out to make life show a profit. As near as we can figure, he never had a very clear notion of what kind of profit he wanted, just a hazy idea that life ought somehow to pay off. I guess that is the way with us, but we discovered last week that we ought to start by defining our expected profit.

However, if this ancient man was like us in being rather unclear as to his goal, he is quite unlike us in his method. We have a tendency to go along just grasping at this promising lead and that possible chance in our attempt to make life pay a dividend for us. Not this man. He is out to find a system for making life pay and he has a method—a scientific method long before people knew there were scientific methods. He will test one way at a time, giving it a full and adequate test. If one way fails he will eliminate it and turn to another. This is a laboratory experiment to answer the question: How do you make life pay off?

He tries four different methods, and the book divides readily on the basis of these four quests. First, there is the quest for wisdom in 1:12-18. This is followed by the quest for pleasure in 2:1-11. In 2:18-6:12 you find him concentrating on making money in an attempt to make life pay his profit. Finally he turns to seek fame in 7:1-11:8.

Koheleth starts out to know all there is to know. Surely knowing enough about life, past and present, would unlock the secret of making life pay. He gives knowledge and wisdom the real old college try. He even learned madness and folly so that he could contrast them with wisdom. He is enthusiastic about it just as many of us get all pepped up about knowing all there is to know. Then there comes a day when he admits to himself, "In much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." His answer to life is not to be found in wisdom. Why?

He gives two reasons. His study of the past showed him that mankind goes round and round, generation after generation making the same mistakes, and there is nothing new under the sun. It doesn't take us long to discover where he got this idea. The cave man used to settle his disputes with his neighbor by batting him over the head with a club rated at two arm-power. Man has continued to use the same bad means of settling things ever since. Now we stand ready to settle disputes, if necessary, with a club rated at several thousand kilos of TNT, even though we know that things may get destroyed by this method, but they don't get settled. We hear people constantly remark, "We have learned to do a lot with

things, but we haven't improved human nature one bit."

That was what disappointed Koheleth. The more he studied, the more instances he found of man's going round and round on the same dismal merry-go-round. But at the same time he was dismayed because there didn't seem to be any way that he could change it: "What is crooked cannot be made straight and what is lacking cannot be numbered."

Then this philosopher tried another method—pleasure. We ought to recognize, however, that his idea of pleasure is a little different from the usual run. We are likely to think of pleasure in terms of a very wild time with wine, women, and song. This man has a much broader and better idea of pleasure. For him it is having everything he wanted when he wanted it, and doing anything he wanted to whenever he pleased. How many times we have thought that life would really be worth living if we could only have everything we wanted. Yet this man comes up with the answer again, "Behold, this also was vanity. I said of laughter, 'It is mad,' and of pleasure, 'What use is it?'" Pleasure didn't pay off, either. Why?

He doesn't come right out and say, but you gather that he discovered that it doesn't take a fellow very long to get all fed up with any one pleasure. Somehow, they don't seem to last very long when pleasure is your end in life. Therefore, he was constantly forced either to find new and different pleasures or to go the rounds of those practices from

which the pleasure had gone.

So our preacher turns now to work as a means of making life show a profit. Now this we can appreciate. He may have been foolish to think that either wisdom or pleasure would pay off, but surely good hard work will. After all, that is the way you make something of life, isn't it? That's the way you really get somewhere. We are very surprised to find that the best this fellow can find to say is that man might as well learn to enjoy his work because he is going to have to do it all his life anyhow. Work certainly didn't pay any profit for him. Why?

Here he gives four reasons. By work man earns and accumulates wealth. This may be money, property, or just things. He can enjoy them for a while even though the pleasure they bring may be pretty temporary, but the big trouble is that he can't take them with him. When he dies his wealth has to be turned over to someone. Koheleth complains that heirs are usually unworthy of their inheritance.

The second problem with work is that your success or failure depends so often on something other than your own effort. Drought, fire, flood, earthquake, or some other "act of God" may wipe out all the results of your labor. The times may not be right, and, since man is so limited in his knowledge of the future, he cannot make any real plans for his work. There is no certainty that he will end up any better off for all his hard work. This is not necessarily just the fault of God, either. Even if he earns a lot of money, he may

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get cheated out of it in the courts; for there is wickedness there, too.

Finally, since man cannot take the results of his labor with him into eternal life, Koheleth can't see much essential difference between a work man and a work horse.

Since wisdom, pleasure, and work have all failed him, he turns at last to fame. Surely the man who becomes famous must get a lot of satisfaction out of life. But he finds two difficulties about fame. For one thing fame is such a temporary thing. The man who may be the lion of society today may be an outcast tomorrow. The other thing wrong with fame is that more often than not it is not based upon worth but upon chance. Circumstances have more to do with fame than ability does. Many a capable and devoted serviceman never gets a ghost of a chance to be a hero.

As you near the end of the book you get the impression that this author, who may be a preacher after all, is trying to get us to figure out that life cannot turn out to be profitable in any way as long as we leave God out. This man had done all his striving on the basis of his own ideas and his own ends. He hadn't figured God in anywhere, and life turned out to be vanity and a seeking after wind. What difference would including God in the plans make?

This wisdom that turned out to be so useless, wouldn't it have had meaning if it had been the pursuit of the understanding of God's purpose and his place in it?

This pleasure which turned sour, would it not become real

Questions for Discussion

1. How are you going about reaping a profit from life? As a group, what is your method? As individuals, what are you doing?
2. This man tried wisdom, pleasure, work, and fame. Are there other methods by which man might make life meaningful?
3. This man left God out of his search. Why is it so easy for us to leave God out? If we want seriously to include him in our plans, how do we go about it?
4. We have only one life to live on earth. By what specific ways can we go about making the most of that life for ourselves and for God?

joy if it were transformed from an end in itself to a means of recreating one's life so as to be more useful to God?

This work that seemed so useless, if by his work man was not just accumulating things for himself but was accomplishing things for God, wouldn't work have meaning and value?

This fame that came so unfairly and fled so swiftly, if a man's fame was based upon his usefulness to God and not on the opinions of men, would the circumstances of life make so much difference?

We have been studying an Old Testament book. Now take a look at Christ and see what his life and teaching does to the picture. Christ took the plans and purposes of the Father into consideration in every step of his life. What did that do to his answer to our question: How do you make life pay off?

A
BIBLE READING
FOR
EVERY DAY
OF THE MONTH

Daily Rations



BY
JAMES V. CLAYPOOL
Secy., promotion of
Bible Use,
American Bible
Society

THEME: Rising Above Your Ignorance

1	How to Build Up	Luke 6:39-49
2	Interruptions Become Opportunities	Luke 10:25-37
3	Try, Try Again	Luke 15:11-32
4	The Highest Defense	John 8:29-32
5	Costly Discipleship	Acts 1:6-14
6	The Creed of a Christian Patriot	Romans 5:12-21
7	Dedication of Our Country	Romans 13:1-14
8	Creative Waiting	Matthew 11:25-30
9	Accentuate the Positive	Matthew 12:33-37
10	The Least-liked Parable?	Matthew 20:1-16
11	Command Performance	Matthew 28:16-20
12	Taught by Young Ones	Mark 10:13-22
13	Inner Wealth and Poverty	Mark 12:41-44
14	A Man Under Orders	John 1:1-14
15	The Highest Award Given Us	John 3:1-17
16	He Is Nearer Than You Think	John 6:16-21
17	Christ Comes From the Gospels	John 12:24-36
18	A Lesson in Humility	John 13:12-20
19	The Confirming Contact	John 20:11-18
20	On the Damascus Highway	Acts 9:1-20
21	Freedom Under God	Romans 8:18-25
22	Supper in an Upper Room	1 Corinthians 11:20-28
23	A Filled-up Life	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
24	Failures Teach Success	2 Corinthians 8:7-12
25	When to Rejoice	Philippians 4:4-20
26	The Power of Positive Virtues	Colossians 3:1-11
27	Rising Above Sin	Colossians 3:12-17
28	Selective Service	2 Timothy 2:1-7
29	For a Pure Life	1 Peter 1:3-9
30	Marvels and Miracles to Come	Revelation 21:1-8
31	How Also to Serve	Ephesians 4:20-32



"You're sweet enough to eat,"
He said in accents warm and low;
"I do eat," said the sweet young
thing,
"Where do you want to go?"

A careful driver approached
the railroad crossing. He stopped,
looked, and listened. All he heard
was the car behind crashing into
his gas tank.

—*Christian Union Herald*

The busy general asked his or-
derly where his pencil was.

"It's behind your ear, sir," he
replied.

"Come, come, corporal! I'm a
busy man. Which ear?"

—*Armed Forces Press Service*



"... So there isn't any need for worry,
Pvt. Hopkins. That lump on your arm
is only the beginning of a muscle..."

A little girl submitted the fol-
lowing composition on "people"
to her teacher:

"People are composed of girls
and boys, also men and women.
Boys are no good at all until they
grow up and get married. Men
who don't get married are no
good either. Boys are an awful
bother. They want everything
they see except soap. My ma is a



"What's this?? You refuse to go on KP!!"

woman, and my pa is a man. A
woman is a grown up girl with
children. My pa is such a nice
man that I think he must have
been a girl when he was a boy."

—*Hoard's Dairyman*

"It looks like rain."

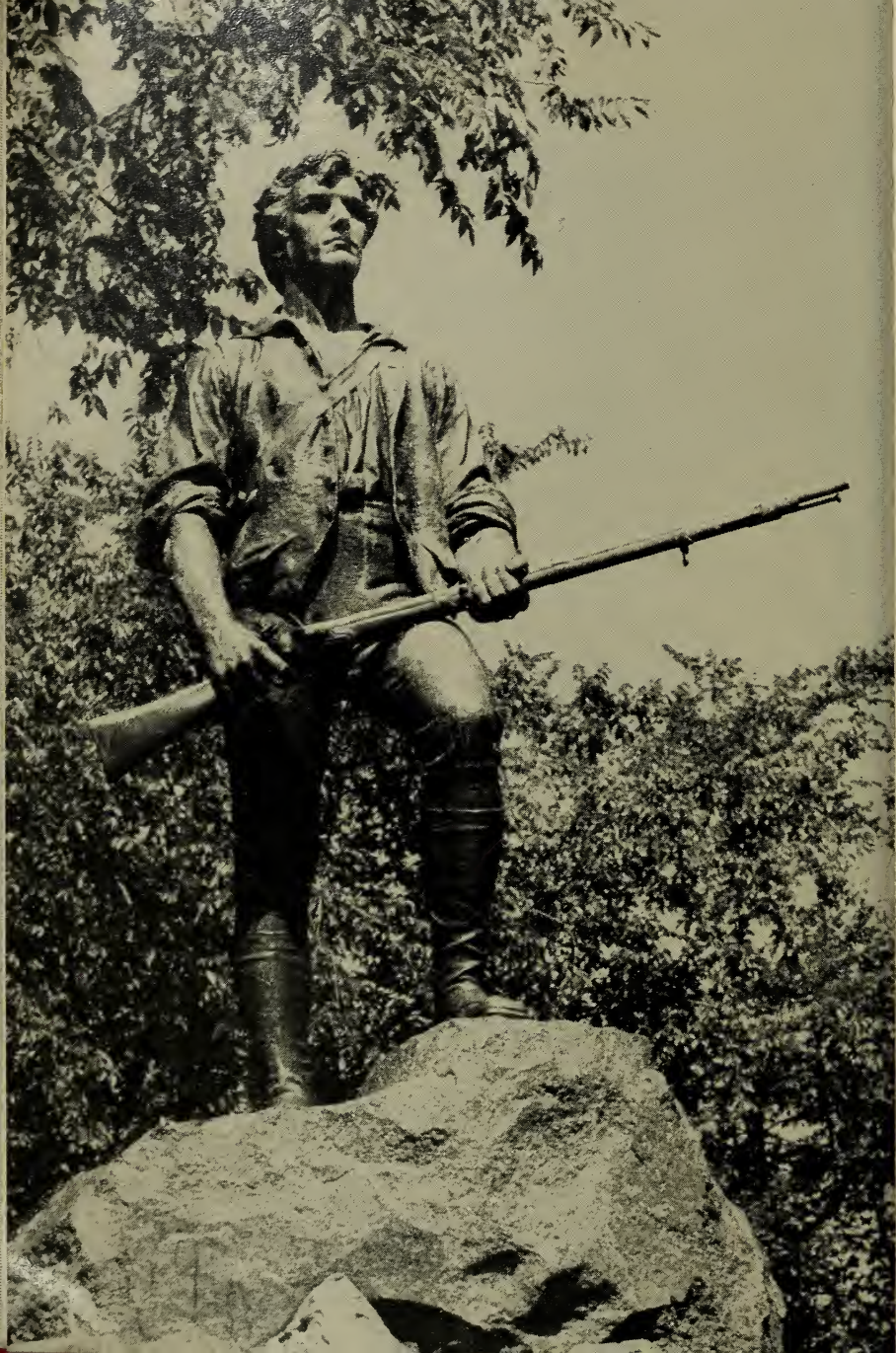
"Not here in California."

"Look at those clouds up there."

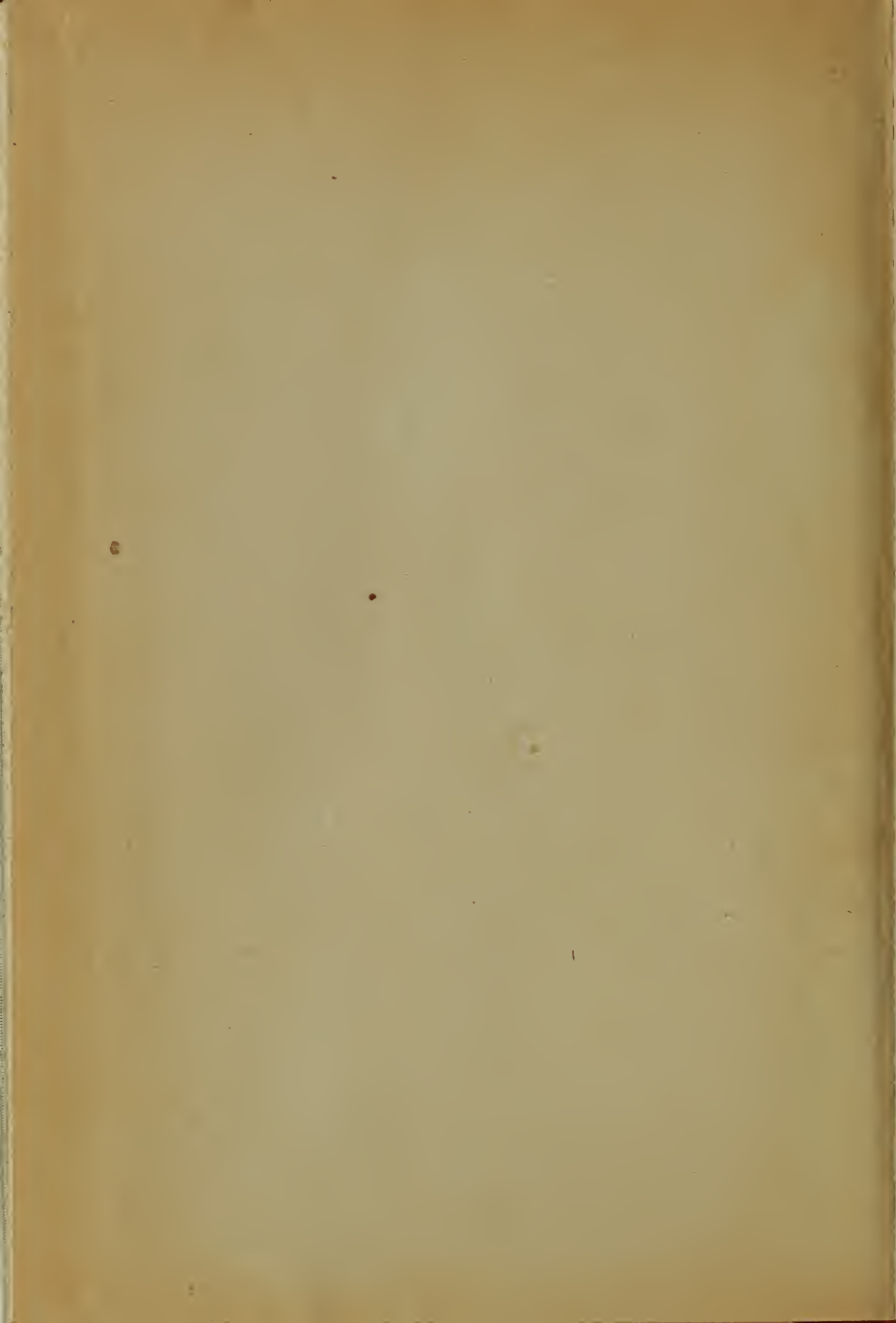
"They don't mean a thing.
They're just empties coming back
from Florida!"

—*Classmate*









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